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Sphinx

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This fan-fiction article, **Sphinx**, was written by [Witcher190](#). Please do not edit this fiction without the writer's permission.

The **sphinx**, plural **sphinxes**, is a lesser demon associated with knowledge, mystery, and silence. Known also by the broader term "*Alzur's Demon*," this category encompasses various beings, including the androsphinx, criosphinx, and hieracosphinx, each possessing unique attributes but sharing a common thematic connection to riddles and guardianship. In their "material" form, sphinxes are distinguished by their lion-like physique combined with a human-animal

Sphinx



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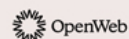
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Taxonomy	
Classification	Alzur's Demon/Lesser Demon
Species	Sphinx
Subspecies	Androsphinx Criosphinx Hieracosphinx
Ecology	
Lifespan	Indefinite until the place where it was summoned is destroyed
Intelligence	Human-like intelligence if not superior

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Discovery and Etymology

The name "*Alzur's Demon*" comes from the famed sorcerer Alzur, who encountered the first known specimen of a sphinx during an expedition to the Red Horn Massif. Within the ruins of the massif, Alzur discovered the sphinx at an altar surrounded by lava. The being asked him the now-famous riddle: "*What creature walks on four legs at dawn, two legs at noon, and three in the evening?*" Alzur correctly answered, "*Man—who crawls on all fours as a baby, walks on two feet as an adult, and uses a cane in old age.*" After solving the riddle and besting the demon, the event became widely known, and [demonologists](#) began referring to this class of beings as "*Alzur's Demon*." This classification includes besides the sphinx, beings like the already mentioned androsphinx, criosphinx, and hieracosphinx, all of which can be defeated by answering their riddles.

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Location

Sphinxes can either be summoned or appear naturally at places of power connected to the [Abyss](#). However, summoning is the more common method, as abyssal places of power—locations charged with extreme dark energy due to many evil acts—are quite rare. Sphinxes make excellent guardians of knowledge, secrets, and other treasures because they are both formidable against physical (and many) magical threats and easier to control than genies. For this reason, rogue mages, [witches](#), warlocks, and even some demonologists prefer to summon sphinxes to guard their secrets rather than relying on golems or gargoyles since they can be more easily destroyed. Sphinxes are bound to the place they guard and can only be killed if that location is destroyed.

Physiology

In its material form, a sphinx has a bronze-like hue, with the body of a lion and a face that is part human, part beast. Its eyes glow and seem fixed, yet they follow anyone who enters its domain. The rest of the sphinx's body often dissolves into a swirling bronze mist, resembling a lion's mane, which spreads across the area it protects.

Abilities

Sphinxes, unlike golems or gargoyles, have the ability to control the traps within the area they guard if an intruder fails their riddle or other mental challenges. Beyond this, they possess limited powers, which is why they are considered lesser demons. They communicate telepathically and are believed to assume a more physical form if their traps are insufficient to stop intruders. However, no one who has ever fought a sphinx has survived to confirm this theory.

Behaviors

The behaviors of sphinxes are predominantly centered around their role as guardians. They are known to pose riddles and mental challenges to those who attempt to access the secrets they protect.

Slaying

There is no traditional method for slaying a sphinx. These beings are intrinsically linked to the location they protect, and destroying their physical body will not result in a permanent victory. Their essence will simply reform as long as the location remains intact. To permanently slay a sphinx, one must destroy or desecrate the site it guards, severing its connection to the material plane.

A sphinx can also be "defeated" by solving its riddle or other mental games. Once a riddle is answered correctly, the sphinx is compelled to release its hold over the secrets it protects and retreat to the Abyss. However, this is only a temporary solution, as sphinxes often re-manifest or are resummoned over time.

In rare cases, it is suggested that a particularly skilled and powerful mage could unbind the sphinx from its location without destroying the site. This would require advanced knowledge of Chasm Magic and the original incantations used to summon the sphinx—knowledge that has largely been lost with the decline of Goetia. Whether this method is truly viable remains speculative.

History

It is believed that the art of demon summoning, Goetia, was practiced by at least one of the elder races inhabiting the northern regions of the [Old Continent](#) before the arrival of humans. Many scholars suggest that the vrans were that race. Since, some beings, like The Operator, with their ability to manipulate time and space, may have aided the vrans in summoning and controlling demons for their purposes.

After humans began discovering sphinxes, early mages sought to summon them, often using ancient ruins as the sites where sphinxes would guard their secrets from prying eyes. One such mage, Albert the Blue, a contemporary of Raffard the White, was instrumental in popularizing the use of sphinxes. Inspired by Albert, warlocks, witches, and other practitioners started summoning sphinxes to guard their knowledge and treasures later on. However, after the Brotherhood War, the subsequent banning of Goetia and necromancy, and the deaths of both Raffard and Albert, the practice of summoning sphinxes fell out of favor. By later centuries, most remaining sphinxes were relics of a bygone era, hidden in remote locations.

Last Report (14th Century)

Sphinxes are believed to have existed at least until the 14th century, with no reports of sightings confirmed beyond that. Between 1360 and 1375, a significant (and probably the last) encounter with a sphinx occurred involving the dwarf Roth and the famed witcher [Putnam Pitch](#), founder of the [School of the Crane](#) (which was then part of the [Griffin School](#)). Roth and Putnam set out on a quest to retrieve the knowledge guarded by a sphinx as a favor to a "friend" of Pitch. This sphinx, rumored to have been summoned centuries earlier by Albert the Blue, was located beneath the peak called the Great Kestrel in the Kestrel Mountains. After discovering a narrow crack in the mountainside, Roth and Putnam entered a massive underground chamber.

The sphinx presented them with a riddle in the traditional manner that older tales of them reported. After a tense exchange, Roth and Putnam successfully solved the riddle and gained access to the knowledge the sphinx was guarding.

However, their triumph was short-lived. Instead of finding valuable knowledge, they discovered a decayed, centuries-old cookbook. The book was in such poor condition that most of its pages crumbled upon touch. Only one recipe remained intact, and Roth derisively remarked that it was hardly worth the effort. Despite the danger and difficulty of the quest, they found no significant treasure or knowledge.

After that, as mentioned before, no new sightings of sphinxes have been reported. Making this encounter in the Great Kestrel, probably the last encounter in the material world with one of these beings.

Notes

- Feel free to expand the history section with more encounters with sphinxes while respecting the previous information. Don't forget to your name in the writer tag.

Trivia

- Albert the Blue is a reference to the Blue Wizards in *The Lord of the Rings*, much like Raffard the White is a nod to Saruman.

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